SPAWN
Image
317
DIGITAL EDITION
TODD MCFARLANE
CARLO BARBERI

WORLD RECORD BREAKING COMIC!

SPAWN

TODD McFARLANE
SCRIPT/PLOT

CARLO BARBERI
ART

TOM ORZECHOWSKI
LETTERING

JAY DAVID RAMOS
COLORS

TODD McFARLANE
BJÖRN BARENDS
FRANCESCO MATTINA
COVER ARTISTS

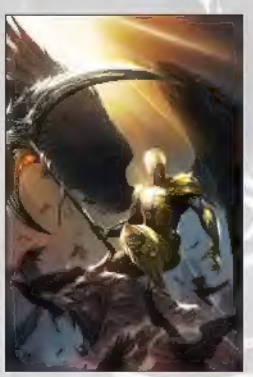
TODD McFARLANE
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

THOMAS HEALY
EDITOR

Production Artist
NIKOLETT MIHÁLKA

Publisher for
Image Comics/
Chief Creative Officer
ERIC STEPHENSON

SPAWN CREATED BY
TODD McFARLANE



PREVIOUSLY IN *SPAWN*

Previously: Cult of Omega – The battle against the sinister Omega rages on in his secret lair. But with the surprise arrival of the Plague, his inevitable victory starts to slip through his bloodied fingers. But with whom will The Plague stand with in the end?

image

TODD McFARLANE
PRODUCTIONS
McFARLANE.COM

Spawn #317. April 2021. Digital Edition. Published by IMAGE COMICS, PO BOX 14457, Portland, OR 97293 USA. Spawn, its logo and its symbol are registered trademarks © 2021 Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. All other related characters are TM and © 2021 Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. All rights reserved. The characters, events and stories in this publication are entirely fictional. With exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc

IT WAS ONLY MEANT TO BE A CONTINGENCY PLAN AND THERE WAS NEVER A THOUGHT HE'D NEED TO USE IT.

NOT WITH HIS PRISONER ALREADY WEAKENED. BUT LIKE SO MANY OTHERS, OMEGA MISCALCULATED WHAT THIS AL SIMMONS SPAWN WAS CAPABLE OF.

ADD TO THAT MISSTEP, THE UNEXPECTED PRESENCE OF TWO MORE HELLSPAWN, BOTH WITH UNIQUE POWERS CONTRASTING SPAWN'S.

MEDIEVAL SPAWN AND THE MYSTERIOUS PLAGUE SPAWN DISRUPTED WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A SIMPLE PROPOSITION: TO GET SPAWN TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE IMPRISONED COGLIOSTRO.

NONE OF THAT CAME TO PASS. SO, AS A LAST RESORT, OMEGA UNLEASHED A MOVE THAT COULD EASILY GIVE AWAY HIS PRESENCE, ONE THAT HAD OTHERWISE BEEN HIDDEN.

'CAUSE DISTRACTIONS'... THAT WAS THE CONTINGENCY PLAN.

AND MAKE THOSE DISTRACTIONS AS VARIED AND GLOBAL AS POSSIBLE.

SPAWN! YOU'RE NEVER LEAVING THIS ISLAND!

EACH EARTHQUAKE HE STARTED WAS MEANT TO FRIGHTEN BUT NOT DESTROY. AT LEAST NOT YET.

NOT WHILE I'M STANDING!

INSTEAD, OMEGA PREYED UPON THE NATURE OF MAN; TO REACT BEFORE THINKING. SCATTERING THEM IN EVERY DIRECTION WITHOUT KNOWING THEY WERE BEING PLAYED.

IN TIME HE'D REVEAL HIMSELF TO THOSE HE MEANT TO LORD OVER, BUT THAT WASN'T NOW.

HE'S GOING WILD!
NO! HE'S SENDING A SIGNAL! THERE MUST BE OTHERS LIKE HIM!
WE HAVE TO SHUT HIM DOWN!
HOW?!
BEFORE HE'S ABLE TO ANSWER, SPAWN'S CAPE, THAT'S BEEN PROTECTING THEM, BEGINS RELAXING AS THE MAELSTROM OF ENERGY LOSES ITS FEROCITY.
THEN, SURPRISINGLY TO THEM ALL, INCLUDING OMEGA, IT CEASES.
I THINK HE'S TOO INJURED.

WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING REPORTS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD INDICATING THAT A SERIES OF SMALL TREMORS BEGAN IN OVER TWO DOZEN LOCATIONS.

THE SEISMIC OBSERVERS WE SPOKE WITH ARE, SO FAR, UNABLE TO GIVE ANY EXPLANATIONS AS TO HOW THAT COULD HAPPEN, OR WHAT IT MEANS. WHAT'S OF GRAVE INTEREST ISN'T THE MAGNITUDE OF THE INITIAL TREMORS--THEY WERE ALL WITHIN NORMAL LEVELS--OR THE EARTHQUAKES THAT FOLLOWED PRECISELY TWENTY-THREE MINUTES LATER. THESE WERE PREDICTABLE TIMEFRAMES. WHAT MAKES THIS SO CONCERNING IS THAT ALL OF THESE BEGAN AT THE EXACT SAME TIME. IT'S AN UNPRECEDENTED OCCURRENCE.

GEO-REFERENCING NETWORKS ARE ON HIGHEST ALERT, GIVEN THE SUDDENLY AMPLIFIED NEED FOR REAL-TIME FEEDBACK FROM THE ENTIRE GLOBE. RESOURCES ARE STRAINED AS NEVER BEFORE.

...FROM THE REPORTING WE'RE GETTING, AND THE LOOK OF THE ***FOOTAGE***, MOST CITIES NEAR THE ***EPICENTER*** OF THESE TREMORS, AND THE EARTHQUAKES THAT ***FOLLOWED***, HAVE SUFFERED REMARKABLY ***MINOR*** DAMAGE. HEAVY DEBRIS HAS CAUSED ONLY ***TWO*** VERIFIED DEATHS.

THE ***SEISMOLOGISTS*** WE'VE SPOKEN WITH ARE ***MOST*** FRUSTRATED WITH THE FACT THAT, SINCE ALL OF THE EARTHQUAKES HAPPENED ***IN UNISON***, THEY HAVE ABSOLUTELY ***NO IDEA*** HOW TO TRACK THE ***SOURCE***. THE HISTORICAL RECORD SHOWS ***NO*** SUCH COORDINATED SERIES OF PLANETARY ***CONVULSIONS***. WITH EVERYTHING HAPPENING AT ONCE, THEY'RE UNABLE TO PINPOINT ***WHICH*** OF THEM MAY HAVE STARTED THIS ***CHAIN-REACTION***.

WHAT HAS THEM CONCERNED AS WELL ARE THE IMPLICATIONS SHOULD THIS BECOME A ***NORMAL PATTERN***.

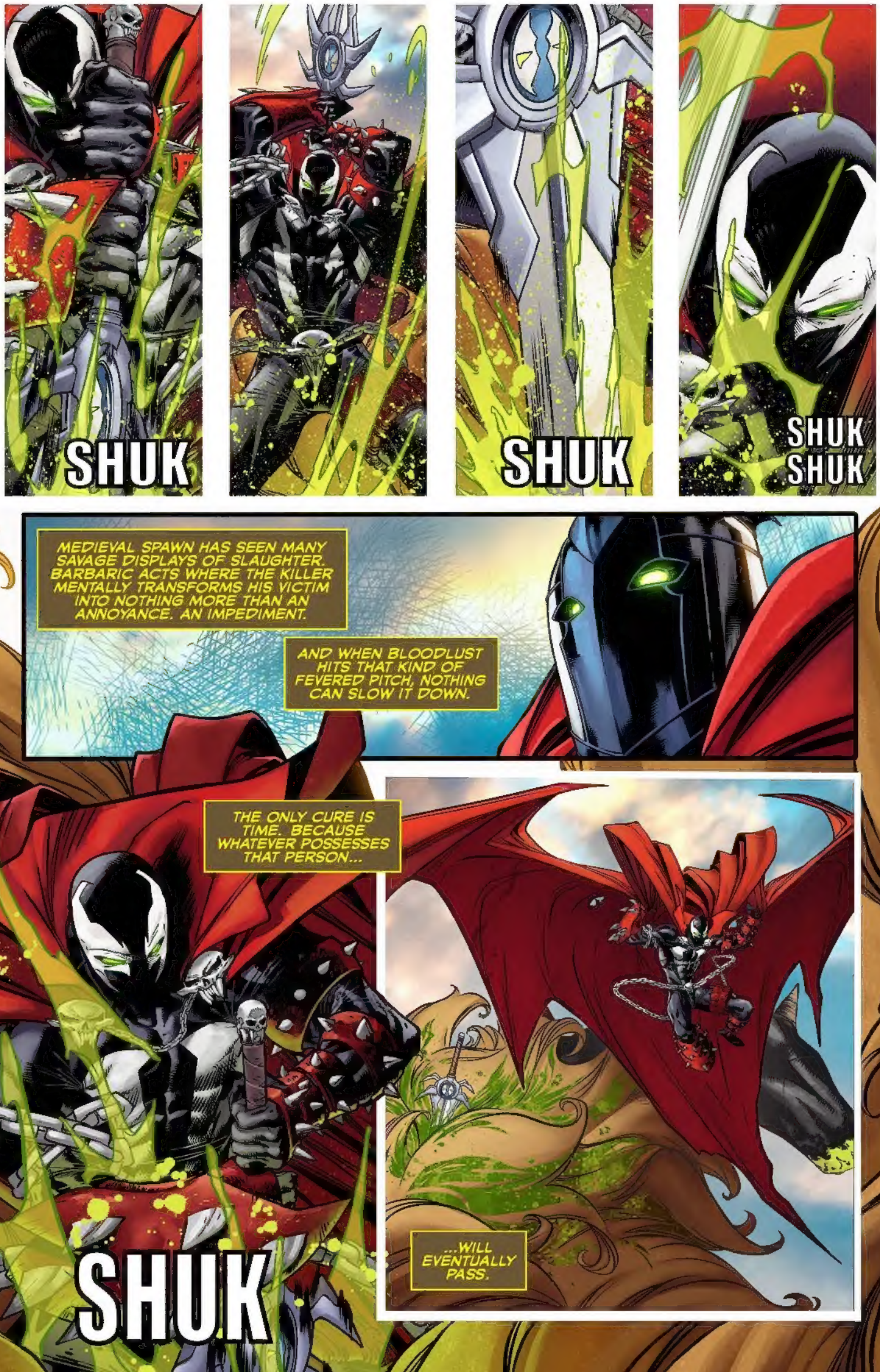
HOW DO WE ***NOT KNOW*** THIS WASN'T ***NORTH KOREA*** OR ***RUSSIA*** OR SOME ***MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISTS*** DETONATING THEIR UNDERGROUND ***NUCLEAR WEAPONS?!***

IT'S NOT ***SCIENTISTS*** WE NEED LOOKING INTO THIS... ***IT'S OUR MILITARY!*** THOSE ***BLACK BUDGETS*** SHOULD BE WORKING FOR US NOW! ***MY TAX DOLLARS*** NEED TO BE FOCUSED ***RIGHT HERE!***

THINK ABOUT IT... USE YOUR ***HEAD!!*** IF YOU WERE SOME ***LUNATIC DICTATOR*** HELLBENT ON SHOWING THE REST OF THE WORLD WHAT A ***BADASS*** YOU ARE...HOW WOULD YOU DO THAT? WHAT'S THE ***BEST*** WAY TO GRAB EVERY LEADER'S ATTENTION?? I'LL TELL YOU HOW...***RATTLE THE WHOLE DAMN WORLD!!!*** DISRUPT ***EVERYTHING!*** NOT ONE ROCKET HERE OR ONE THERE. ***NO!*** SHOOT YOUR ***WHOLE WAD*** AND BLANKET THE ***ENTIRE PLANET.***

OUR ***PRECIOUS WAY OF LIFE*** DEPENDS ON HAVING OUR INTELLIGENCE SNAKING ITS WAY INTO ***EVERY CORNER*** OF...

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING WITH THIS ISLAND...I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT OMEGA. THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE!
OUR COMPUTER PICKED UP MULTIPLE SIGNALS. IT'S THE REASON I CAME HERE! BUT I CAN'T FIND MY ANSWERS...
...IF THIS THING IS ALIVE!


SHUK
SHUK
SHUK
SHUK
SHUK
MEDIEVAL SPAWN HAS SEEN MANY SAVAGE DISPLAYS OF SLAUGHTER. BARBARIC ACTS WHERE THE KILLER MENTALLY TRANSFORMS HIS VICTIM INTO NOTHING MORE THAN AN ANNOYANCE. AN IMPEDIMENT.
AND WHEN BLOODLUST HITS THAT KIND OF FEVERED PITCH, NOTHING CAN SLOW IT DOWN.
THE ONLY CURE IS TIME. BECAUSE WHATEVER POSSESSES THAT PERSON...
...WILL EVENTUALLY PASS.

AND WITH THAT PASSING, A SENSE OF CALM AND NORMALITY REPLACE THE MADNESS.

I NEED TO FIND WHATEVER THAT THING WAS THAT CAME OUT OF THAT HOLE.

I'LL HELP. BUT YOU NEED TO TAKE A DEEP BREATH, FIRST.

HE DOES--NOT BECAUSE OF HIS MENTAL STATE-- BUT BECAUSE HE KNOWS HE'S PUSHING HIMSELF MORE THAN HE'S LETTING ON.
I'M GOOD NOW. WHERE DID HE THROW THAT HELL-SPAWN?*
TO THE NORTH-EAST.
*Last issue-- Todd
WHAT ABOUT MONOLITH?
I TOLD YOU, HE DIDN'T MAKE IT!
THEN, FROM BEHIND, THEY HEAR IT. AS THEY TURN, BOTH OF THEM KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
WHAT'S IT GOING TO TAKE?

IN OTHER WORDS—CAN
ANYTHING
KILL THIS
MONSTROSITY?
RUN!

MEDIEVAL SPAWN ATTEMPTS TO GRAB HIS SHIELD. IT'S TOO LATE
ARMOR

FINALLY.
I NEED... REST.
HIS HOARSE BREATHING MASKS THE SLIGHT ECHO DRIFTING FROM THE PIT
IT COMES A MILE DOWN, IN A DEEP, BLACK COLDNESS CAPABLE OF FREEZING BLOOD
IT'S NOT THE WHIMPER OF A FALLEN FOE, TORTURED BEYOND IMAGINATION
NO, IF YOU LISTEN CAREFULLY, YOU WILL HEAR SOMETHING ELSE
HEE HEE HEE HEE

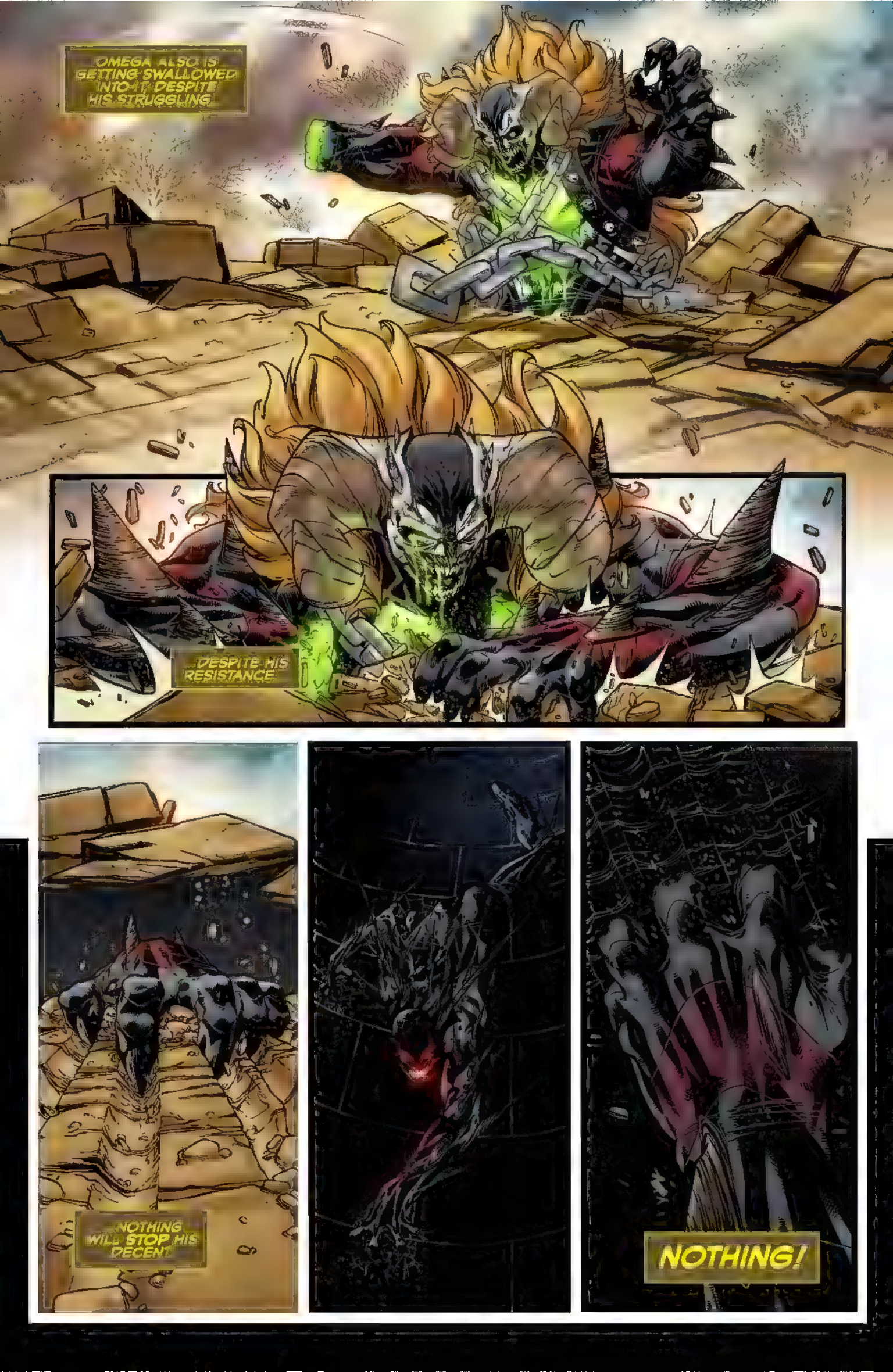
ABOVE, PLAGUE SPAWN EMERGES FROM A HIDDEN CRACK LIKE A DEADLY SNAKE IT SILENTLY MOVES ACROSS THE MOUNTAIN OF RUBBLE CLOSING IN ON ITS TARGET
WHO IS FOCUSED ON SEEING THE EVIDENCE OF HIS RECENT KILL
WHEN THE MASSIVE BOULDER IS LIFTED, VERY LITTLE IS LEFT
A SHIELD?
Chink
Chink

SLOWED FROM HIS BATTLE, OMEGA'S REACTIONS HAVE BEEN SLOWED. HE'S UNABLE TO SWAT ASIDE THE CHAINS ROCKETING FROM THE GROUND BENEATH HIS FEET
GUK?
WITH A NUMBING STING THE LINKS TIGHTEN AROUND FRESH STAB WOUNDS ON THE BACK OF HIS NECK
KRAK
MEDIEVAL-- MY CHAINS, GRAB THEM AND BRING HIM DOWN!
OUR SECOND HERO UNBURIES HIMSELF TOO
BOOM
I CAN'T GET LEVERAGE!

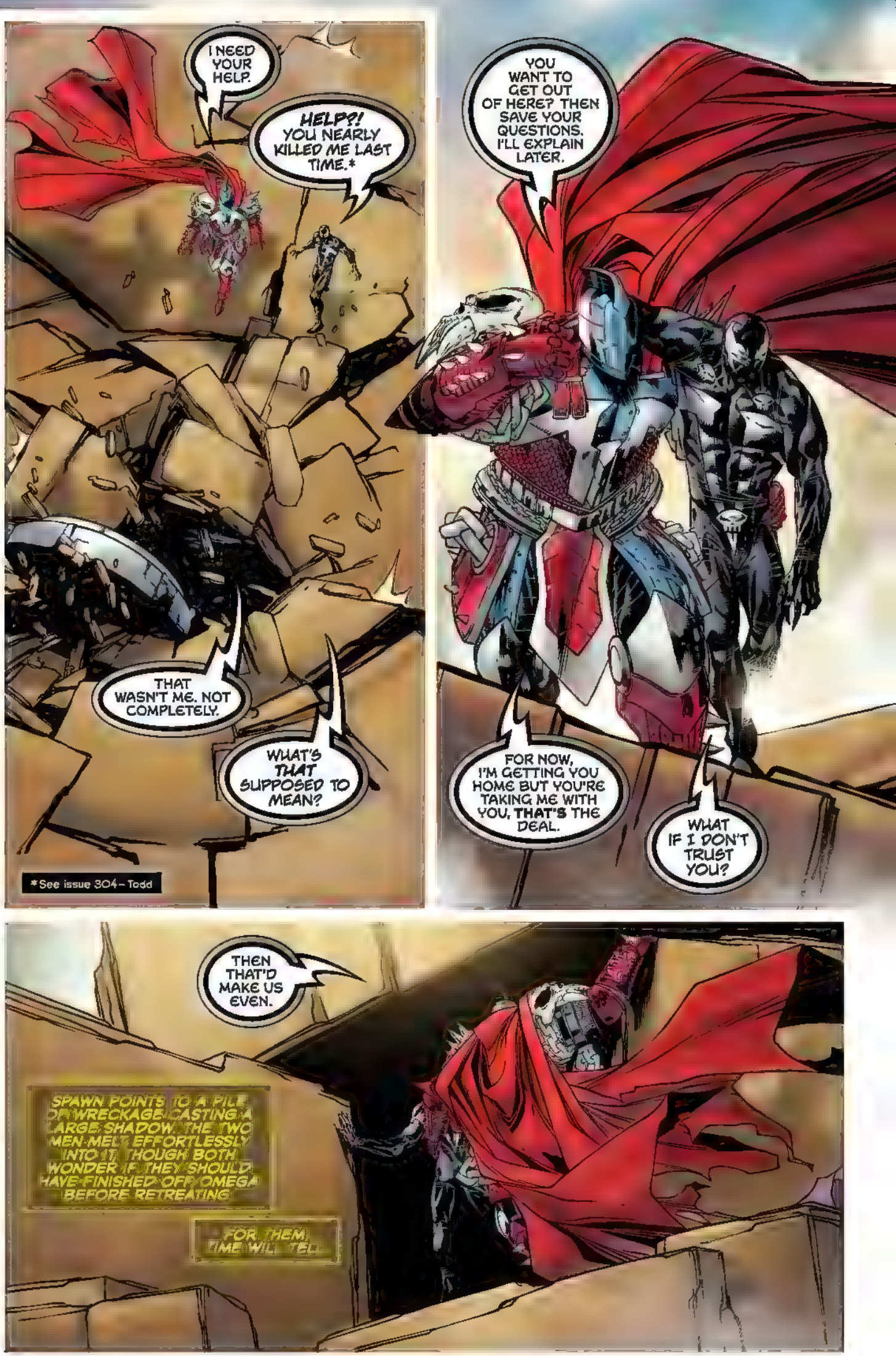
THAT'S A FIXABLE PROBLEM
BLACK TENDRILS SLITHER TOWARD THE THRASHING GIANT, COILING AROUND EACH OF HIS LEGS
BY THE TIME OMEGA NOTICES, IT'S TOO LATE. HE CAN'T UNTIE HIS THROAT AND LEGS WITH JUST ONE HAND!
THE TWO-PRONGED ATTACK IS EXECUTED TO PERFECTION. THE HELLSPAWN ARE ABOUT TO COMPLETE THEIR OWN "DISTRACTION" PLAN

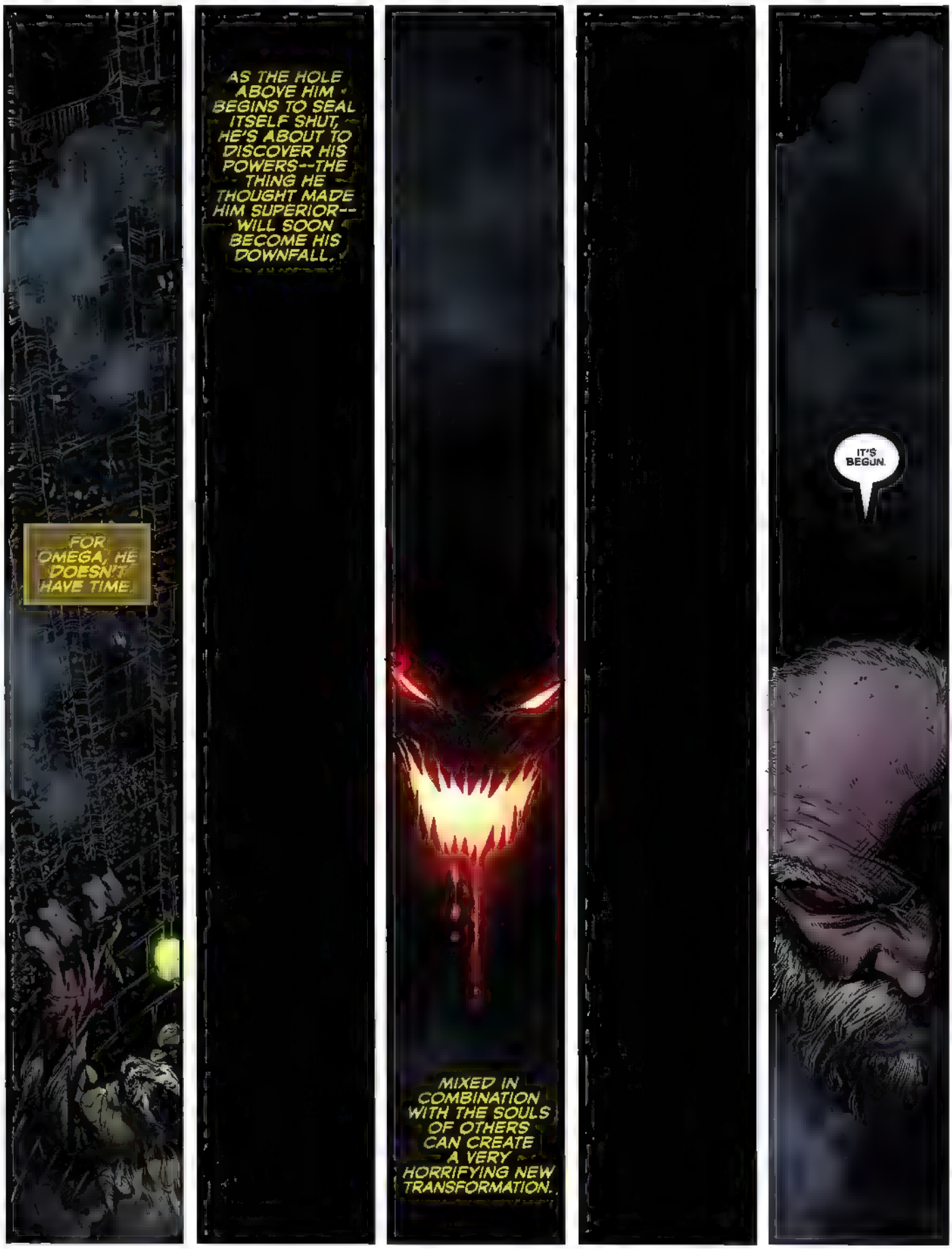
WHEN HE HITS THE GROUND CUT HIS HEAD OFF!
THERE WON'T BE TIME!
WE HAVE NO CHOICE. IT'S OUR ONLY CHOICE. WE DON'T GUT HIM NOW, HE'LL ALERT OTHERS. THEY'LL KILL MILLIONS, YOU KNOW THAT! DO IT!
TRIOOM

BEFORE MEDIEVAL GATHERS HIS SWORD, OMEGA BEGINS TO MOVE LIKE SOME BATTLESHIP BEING STEERED BY A TUGBOAT
THE DEADLY HUNTER PLAGUE SPAWN DRAGS HIS PRIZED TROPHY, THEN CRAWLS BACK INTO THE BLACK ABYSS OF THE PIT


OMEGA ALSO IS GETTING SWALLOWED INTO IT, DESPITE HIS STRUGGLING
...DESPITE HIS RESISTANCE
NOTHING WILL STOP HIS DECENT
NOTHING!

DO WE GO AFTER HIM?
NO.
BUT HE'S STILL ALIVE.
I KNOW... IT'S A RISK.
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING DOWN THERE, SOMETHING WE HAVEN'T SEEN YET AND THAT'S WHAT'S GOT ME WORRIED. THERE'S ONLY A FEW PLACES, GLOBALLY, GIVING OFF THAT SAME SIGNAL.
WAS IT THAT BLACK HELL-SPAWN?
NO, WE GIVE OFF DIFFERENT READINGS.
YOU KNEW OMEGA WAS HERE AND YOU CAME ANYWAY?
DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE. YOU SEE HOW FAST THINGS ARE MOVING.
THE GROUND..! IT'S COLLAPSING! I NEED TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE!
TO WHERE? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY YOU'RE EVEN HERE!


I NEED YOUR HELP.
HELP?! YOU NEARLY KILLED ME LAST TIME.*
THAT WASN'T ME. NOT COMPLETELY.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
*See issue 304– Todd
YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE? THEN SAVE YOUR QUESTIONS. I'LL EXPLAIN LATER.
FOR NOW, I'M GETTING YOU HOME BUT YOU'RE TAKING ME WITH YOU. THAT'S THE DEAL.
WHAT IF I DON'T TRUST YOU?
THEN THAT'D MAKE US EVEN.
SPAWN POINTS TO A PILE OF WRECKAGE CASTING A LARGE SHADOW. THE TWO MEN MELT EFFORTLESSLY INTO IT, THOUGH BOTH WONDER IF THEY SHOULD HAVE FINISHED OFF OMEGA BEFORE RETREATING
FOR THEM, TIME WILL TELL


FOR OMEGA, HE DOESN'T HAVE TIME.
AS THE HOLE ABOVE HIM BEGINS TO SEAL ITSELF SHUT, HE'S ABOUT TO DISCOVER HIS POWERS--THE THING HE THOUGHT MADE HIM SUPERIOR--WILL SOON BECOME HIS DOWNFALL.
MIXED IN COMBINATION WITH THE SOULS OF OTHERS CAN CREATE A VERY HORRIFYING NEW TRANSFORMATION.
IT'S BEGUN.

9:2:1:3

SPAWNING GROUND

PRESENTS:

THE BREAKDOWN

INTERVIEW WITH BJÖRN BARENDS

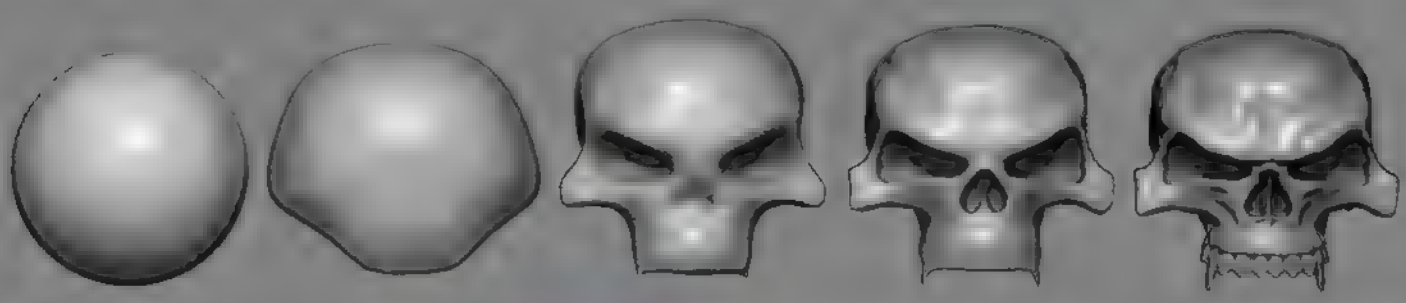
Björn, your covers have made quite an impact with Spawn fans over the last several months. Can you take us through your creative process?

I own hundreds of art books and comics and I have a very good visual memory, so years later I still know which image I once saw in which book. But I get the best ideas when I'm alone, in the car or walking in nature mostly with heavy metal on the headphones. When I have an idea in my head, I try out a few things on the computer. Create a few rough 3D models and paint over a few things roughly. The whole process takes longer than it takes to make pencil sketches, but when I make several designs with the same 3D models, my way is worth it. If I like what I see, I work it out a little more and send the best drafts to Todd.

What do you think your favorite cover is so far?

I assume you mean from the covers I made, otherwise it will be difficult to choose just one. I think I like the soon to be released cover that shows the transformation from clown to violator the best. Simply because it was really difficult and the biggest challenge for me. I try to challenge myself with every image I make, but some things are harder to do than others, so I'm even more happy when it turns out well.

Issue 319 cover by **BJÖRN BARENS**



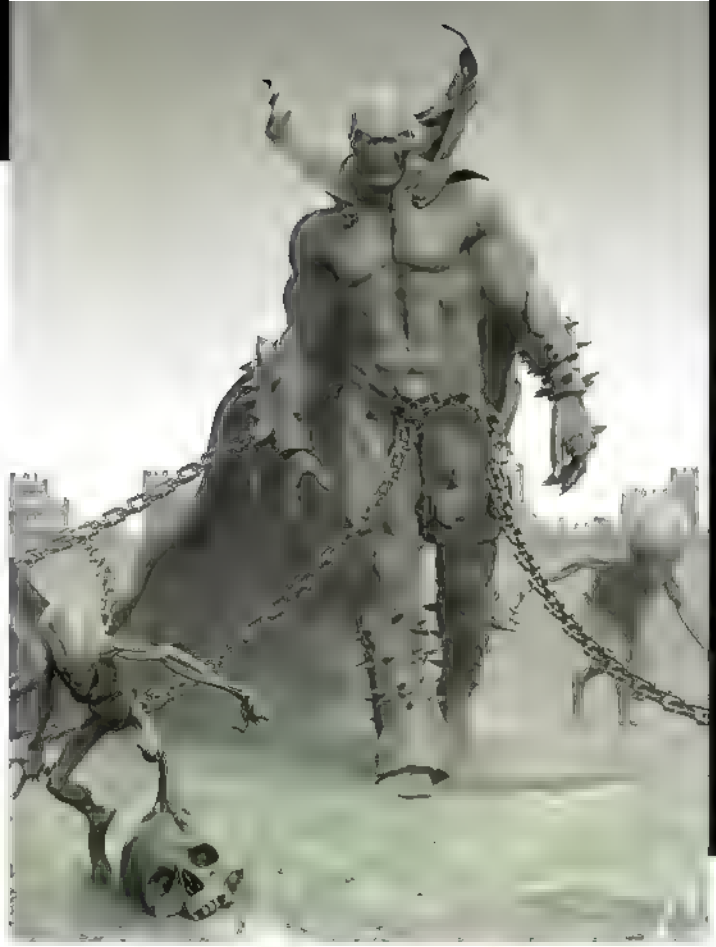
Zbrush 3D model work process by **BJÖRN BARENS**

Your art is obviously not just ink on paper. What are some of the tools that you find essential?

I have created my images in the past with airbrush and ink, but I am then at some point completely switched to the digital way. Today my work is mainly done in Photoshop and Zbrush. I use Photoshop to paint and Zbrush to create 3D models. This way I can set different camera angles, move or rotate figures and I don't need references in exactly the right pose or from the right angle, so I can work much more freely compared to before and also make changes more easily. When I have everything the way I want it, I continue working in 2D, which is about 50% of the work, and I always consider what I can do better in 2D and what I can do better in 3D.

Most of your work seems to lean into "dark and creepy" motifs, which is a perfect fit for Spawn. What draws you to that genre?

I think it has always fascinated me. Even as a child I loved to draw monsters or the bad guys and when my parents were asleep, I snuck over to the TV and secretly watched horror movies. The dark has for me its own kind of beauty and also its own humor.
I realized early on that even in comics, the bad guys and the antiheroes fascinate me more - they're more complex, don't automatically do the right thing, and have human flaws. For me, for example, John Walker as the "New Captain America" was awesome and he was much more interesting than Steve Rogers who always knew what was the right thing to do.
And when I picked up a Spawn comic for the first time, a new world opened up for me, I had never seen anything so cool. I can say that Spawn and all the fantastic artists that have worked on the comics over the years have had a huge influence on my style. For me Spawn was never a classic superhero and I try



Issue 317 Cover 3D model by **BJÖRN BARENS**

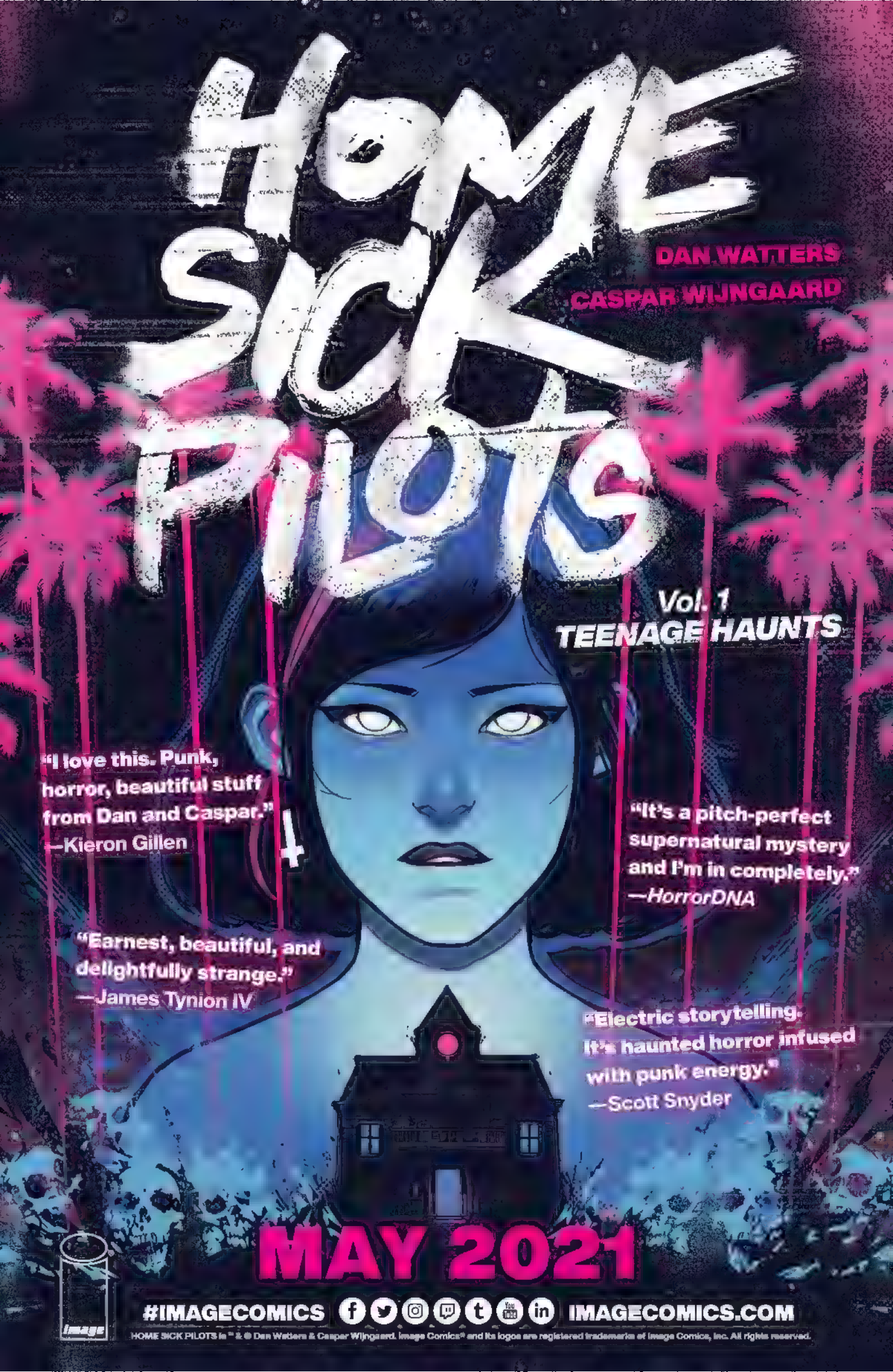
to reflect in my creations what the Spawn universe looks like through my eyes. But of course I can also paint a unicorn bathing in candies if it is requested. 😉

What's next for Björn?

That's a good question, the last year has shown me how quickly all plans and goals can change from one day to the next. And the effects are still so strong here in Europe that I can't really make plans. But I hope the SPAWN Readers will enjoy some more of my covers, I definitely have a lot of fun and want to create more of them. I'm also still working on some McFarlane toys and I am really excited about how the Spawn Universe is developing now. I think it has great potential for the future. Maybe one day I will be able to create an entire comic in my style....we'll see!

Zbrush 3D model by **BJÖRN BARENS**

VELVET
ROYAL CITY
LAZARUS
EAST OF WEST
I KILL GIANTS
THE WALKING DEAD
KING CITY
SEX CRIMINALS
KILL OR BE KILLED
CURSE WORDS
RATQUEENS
SPAWN
BLUE MONDAY
MONSTRESS
CHEW
NOWHERE MEN
HOWTOONS
SUNSTONE
DESCENDER
PAPER GIRLS
OCTOPUS PIE
TOKYO GHOST
BITCH PLANET
SAGA
WAYWARD
PLUTONA
REVIVAL
NAILBITER
CAMP MIDNIGHT
ODDLY NORMAL
MAGE
HINGES
BLACK SCIENCE
IMAGE
CLASSICS
image
A BOOK FOR EVERY READER.
IMAGECOMICS.COM


HOME SICK PILOTS
DAN WATTERS
CASPAR WIJNGAARD
Vol. 1
TEENAGE HAUNTS
"I love this. Punk, horror, beautiful stuff from Dan and Caspar."
—Kieron Gillen
"It's a pitch-perfect supernatural mystery and I'm in completely."
—HorrorDNA
"Earnest, beautiful, and delightfully strange."
—James Tynion IV
"Electric storytelling. It's haunted horror infused with punk energy."
—Scott Snyder
MAY 2021
#IMAGECOMICS
IMAGECOMICS.COM
HOME SICK PILOTS is ™ & © Dan Watters & Casper Wijngaard. Image Comics® and its logos are registered trademarks of Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.

DECLAN SHALVEY | RORY MCCONVILLE | JOE PALMER

TIME BEFORE TIME™

FOLLOW #IMAGECOMICS

IMAGECOMICS.COM

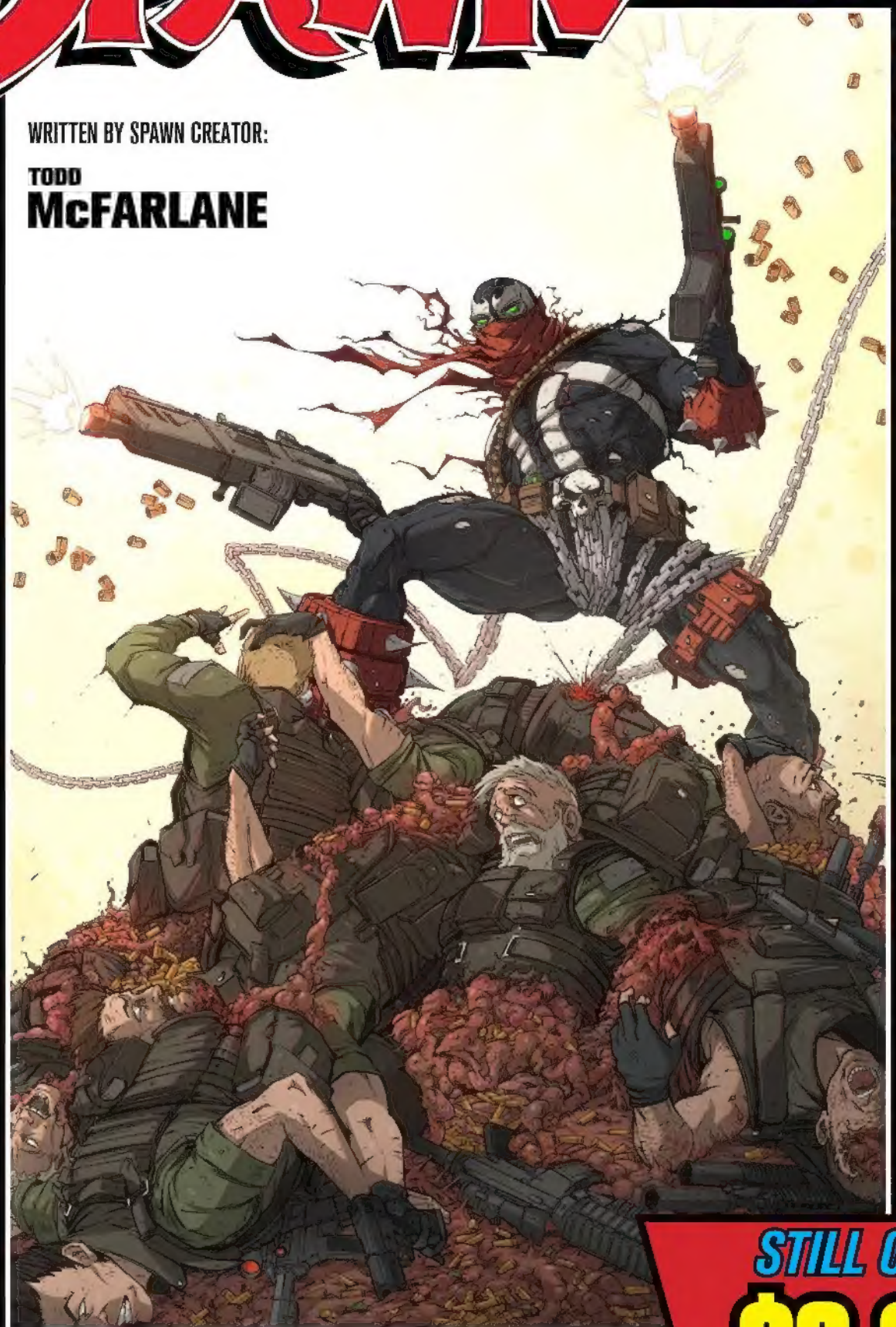
IN STORES >>> MAY 2021

TIME BEFORE TIME is TM & © 2021 Declan Shalvey, Rory McConville & Joe Palmer.
Image Comics® and its logos are registered trademarks of Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.

SPAWN® 318

WRITTEN BY SPAWN CREATOR:

TODD
McFARLANE



STILL ONLY
$2.99

MAY 2021

ONLY FROM
IMAGECOMICS.COM

Image Comics® and the logos are registered trademarks of Image comics, Inc. All rights reserved

image
317
DIGITAL EDITION
TODD MCFARLANE
CARLO BARBERI
SPAWN
McFARLANE +FCO

SPAWN
Image
317
DIGITAL EDITION
TODD
MCFARLANE
CARLO
BARBERI

image
317
DIGITAL EDITION
SPAWN
TODD MCFARLANE
CARLO BARBERI
McFARLANE